Governor's Education Emergency Relief

Framework for Appropriate Use of Technology

1. Alignment with Curriculum Goals

- **Objective-driven Selection**: Choose digital tools that directly support the curriculum's learning objectives. This means the tool should contribute to skill development in key areas across developmental domains.
- **Content Relevance**: Ensure the digital tool's content is age-appropriate, accurate, and reflects the diversity and inclusivity of the curriculum.

2. Developmental Appropriateness

- **Cognitive Development**: Select tools that engage children at their current cognitive stage, offering a balance between challenges and achievable tasks. Tools that foster problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity are ideal.
- **Physical Development**: Choose tools that support fine motor skills (e.g., touchscreen or mouse interactions) and avoid excessive screen time that might hinder gross motor development.
- **Social and Emotional Development**: Ensure the tools encourage social interaction, collaboration, and empathy-building activities. Tools should also support emotional regulation and positive behavior reinforcement.
- **Multisensory Learning**: The tool should engage more than one sense (sight, sound, touch), promoting active learning rather than passive consumption.

3. User-Friendliness

- **Ease of Use**: The tool should have an intuitive interface with minimal barriers for children to interact with. Age-appropriate designs with simple navigation and clear instructions are essential.
- **Teacher-Friendliness**: It should also be easy for educators to integrate into their teaching practice, with clear settings, progress monitoring, and the ability to adapt the tool to varying student needs.

4. Safety and Privacy

- **Data Protection**: Ensure that any tool you use complies with privacy regulations such as COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act). Check if the tool collects, shares, or stores any data and if so, make sure it's secure and confidential.
- **Content Safety**: The tool should have appropriate safeguards in place to prevent children from being exposed to harmful or unsuitable content.

Created by Terry Surprenant, EASTCONN 5/13/25

5. Engagement and Motivation

- **Interactive Features**: Digital tools should engage children actively, encouraging exploration, creativity, and interaction rather than passive screen time. Games, challenges, and hands-on learning experiences can increase motivation and focus.
- **Feedback**: Look for tools that provide positive reinforcement and immediate feedback, which are essential for young children's development and help reinforce learning outcomes.

6. Flexibility and Adaptability

- **Customization**: Tools that allow for tailoring to individual learning styles and developmental stages can be more effective. This includes the ability to modify the difficulty of tasks or adapt the content to support specific developmental needs.
- **Multimodal Accessibility: Make sure the tool can be used across multiple devices** (tablets, computers, etc.) and provides options for children with varying abilities, including those with special needs.

7. Professional Development and Support

- **Training**: Consider tools that offer professional development resources for educators. Tools with built-in tutorials, guides, or customer support can enhance the educator's ability to use them effectively.
- **Ongoing Evaluation**: Tools should be regularly assessed for their impact on student learning, and the educator should have a means of tracking progress to inform adjustments and improvements in teaching strategies.

8. Cost and Accessibility

- **Budget Considerations**: Evaluate the cost of the tool and determine if it provides good value for the learning outcomes it supports. There are also many high-quality free or low-cost resources available.
- **Access for All**: Consider whether all students have equal access to the technology needed to use the tool, such as internet access or device availability.